



The Case Head

The Official Publication of the Massachusetts Law Enforcement
Firearms Instructors & Armorers Association

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The Case Head



The official publication of the
Massachusetts Law Enforcement Firearms Instructors & Armorers Association
P.O. Box 253, Princeton, MA 01541-0253

MISSION STATEMENT

The Massachusetts Law Enforcement Firearms Instructors' & Armorers' Association was formed to promote professionalism, continuing education, improvement in training methods and techniques of the proper law enforcement use of firearms in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

The Association strives to promote and foster mutual cooperation between instructors. Through discussion and a common interest in law enforcement firearms training, officer survival and tactical skills, MLEFIAA hopes to keep the members at the forefront of firearms training. Through our monthly meetings and annual training conference, we provide a means for the exchange of ideas and information regarding law enforcement firearms training, training methods, educational activities and new firearms technologies.

MLEFIAA currently has over 400 members. While mainly from Massachusetts, our membership extends internationally to countries as far away as Sweden. The Association endeavors to secure new members from the law enforcement training community who are engaged in the field of firearms training, maintenance, education or related fields. Our goal is to continuously upgrade the level of firearms training of law enforcement personnel here in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

Membership is offered at two levels - Active & Associate. Active membership is open to all duly sworn law enforcement officers of any local, county, state, federal or specialized law enforcement agency within the Commonwealth of Massachusetts; whose official duties include the training of law enforcement personnel in the proper use of firearms; or whose duties involve the maintenance and repair of firearms for their respective agencies.

Associate membership is open to sworn law enforcement firearms instructors and armorers from agencies outside of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, non-sworn firearms instructors & armorers working within an agency within the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and representatives of private industry who are engaged in the design, development, manufacture, or training in firearms, ammunition and other related technologies designed for law enforcement use.

Complete details can be found at our website: www.MLEFIAA.org

Articles & Letters to the Editor

Articles and letters should be no more than 1000 words in length and submitted in MS Word. Any photos should be in JPEG format. MLEFIAA encourages a healthy discussion of training issues but we require that you keep it level headed and respect opposing views. You do not have to agree, but we will not publish articles that are inflammatory or otherwise do not uphold the reputation of this Association.

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Cover photo & conference photos courtesy of Ed Woodruff

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ASK THE TRAINING OFFICER by Lt. Ed O'Leary

Ed. Note: Ask The Training Officer is a new column by Ed O'Leary who works for the Randolph (MA) P. D. Ed is also the First V.P. with the Association.

There is no such thing as "friendly fire". Most of you probably remember Officer Cornell Young who was tragically killed by fellow Providence officers. Young was off duty, in civilian attire and was responding to assist on duty officers. He was not recognized by the officers and was shot in the confusion.

This sort of tragic situation has long been a problem in

police work. To remedy this predicament, NYPD developed the challenge - "Police, don't move" and the response, "I'm on the job" which has been nearly universally adopted.

In order to prevent bad situations from deteriorating, if you are involved in this type of situation while on duty, remember to use the familiar standard police challenge, "police - don't move" when challenging a suspect when your weapon is drawn. This identifies you as a police officer and is a clear command. If you are ever in plain clothes with your gun out and are

challenged by a uniformed officer on duty officer giving you such a command; shout the answer out, "I'm on the job." Then DO NOT MOVE. Follow all commands by given by the uniformed officer including dropping your weapon if so ordered. Officers will most likely be focused on your weapon and not your face or badge/ID.

Remember, if you are in civilian clothes and carrying your weapon, wear your badge next to the holster and have your ID, cuffs, spare ammo and a way to communicate.

Tactical Awareness Is Not Just For Gunfights

This may not be the usual fare for the Case Head but every once in a while, the editor (me), gets to bend the rules a little. Most of you direct traffic. Even if you don't do details, you are likely to have to direct traffic at an accident scene.

I am writing this in the surgical waiting area of Brigham & Women's hospital where I sit with the family of a Duxbury officer who was struck and critically injured while working a traffic detail. They have been here for five days and the end is not in sight. The extent of the officer's injuries makes the prognosis bleak even if the officer survives. What makes this even more difficult (and ironic) is I

turned that detail down. Based on the reports from the scene, I feel I would have been doing the exact same thing as the injured officer was doing when he was struck. It kind of makes you think about things.

If you are going to be standing in the road - don't be a speed bump. Illuminate yourself if possible at night. Wear as much high visibility and reflective clothing as possible. Above all, do not rely on drivers seeing you to keep you safe. Never turn your back on moving traffic. Expect the unexpected. Remind yourself not to get focused in any one direction when danger can come from another. Tactical awareness is always mentioned with deadly force training and

patrol procedures.

Jeff Cooper told us when we are working, we should always be in condition YELLOW - relaxed but aware and alert to what is going on around us; constantly scanning our surroundings for threats or events that may threaten others.

Standing in a busy intersection or road is a very dangerous situation. We tend to downplay the danger because we do it so much that we have gotten pretty good at it. This familiarity may lead to a false sense of security though. Think about it - everything out there outweighs us by a factor of ten or more! When it comes to vehicle vs. human body, we are the loser.

Monthly Meeting Calendar

Jan 2009
S&W Academy
(Elections)

Feb 26, 2008
Duxbury PD

Mar 25, 2008
Braintree Rifle & Pistol (hosted by Randolph P.D.)

Apr 22, 2008
Berlin P.D.

May 27, 2008
U.S. Postal Insp. Service - Boston

June 24, 2008
Barre Sportsman's Club - Instructor Recerts

July & August
No meeting
Summer Break

Sept 23-26, 2008
Annual Instructor Conference
Devens

October 21, 2008
Westminster PD

November 2008
Sig Sauer Academy

December 2008
Westminster PD E-Board Nominations / Ed Gross presentation

Watch your E-mail for details

Product Review - MAGPUL® PMAG™ 30 Round Magazine

Reviewed by Todd Bailey

Always on the lookout for new products, I have been looking at Magpul's PMAG 30 round magazine for the AR15 and M16 series of rifles. While at the CT SWAT Challenge I purchased two in 5.56x45mm caliber for field testing.

These magazines differ from the typical military type in that they are constructed of a high strength polymer rather than welded sheet metal. According to Magpul, the magazine features a constant curve internal geometry for smooth feeding. The anti-tilt, self lubricating follower was designed for increased reliability as does the stainless steel spring. A textured exterior surface gives the user a better grip under wet or slippery conditions.

The overall design of this product is a big improvement over the sheet metal varieties. First, the polymer construction is stronger than the metal versions. This is demonstrated by a video shot in Iraq and featured on You Tube. They compare the PMAG 30 to a military issue and H&K built 30 round magazine. In all cases, the PMAG proves more rugged and reliable than the competitors. A link to this can be found on Magpul's website.

There were several other features which I found desirable on this product. Unlike Milspec magazines, the PMAG does not have to be down loaded by one or two rounds. It can be loaded with 30 rounds and still reliably locks into the rifle with the bolt closed.

For users who are required to keep loaded magazines ready to go in dirty environments, the impact cover is just the answer. It protects the feed lips and prevents debris from entering the magazine which could cause malfunctions. The impact cover also serves as a Go/No Go Gauge which can be used to verify feed lip dimensions. The impact cover is also used as a disassembly tool. One recommendation I would



suggest is to make the impact cover a different color just a reminder that it has to be removed prior to inserting into the rifle. The PMAG disassembles easily for cleaning and inspection.

Loading the PMAG is performed in the conventional manner. Stripper clips, Maglula Benchloader and LULA® loading accessories are all compatible with the PMAG.

The floor plate extends slightly outward forming a lip which gives you a better grip when drawing the magazine from a pouch. It is a drawback when you need to carry two or more mags side by side in a close fitting pouch such as I have on my First Choice Assault Vest. If you are concerned the polymer construction makes the magazine a little thicker,

no need to worry. The external dimensions are identical to the metal magazines and these fit nicely in Kydex belt pouches such as those from Blade-Tech.

I've used these magazines for about a month now without a single glitch. Function and feed is flawless. Similar results were reported by a friend who works on a regional SWAT team and has been using them for almost a year now.

The PMAG is available in black, O.D. green, Foliage Green and Flat Dark Earth brown.

Suggested retail price is \$14.95 which makes it a little more expensive than Milspec magazines but considerably less than the Heckler & Koch variety.



2008 INSTRUCTOR TRAINING CONFERENCE SUCCESSFUL

The 2008 MLEFIAA Firearms Instructor Training Conference was extremely successful despite a slumping economy and tight budgets. Fifty seven members participated in the four day program.

The first day consisted of classroom sessions ranging from Alternatives to the Four Man Contact Team Concept in Active Shooter Incidents, History of the New Paradigm System of Firearms Instruction, Ground Fighting and Empty vs. Shank.

Fifteen companies set up displays and demonstrated the latest in firearms and related technology at the Law Enforcement Training Expo. Products also included tactical clothing, equipment, range supplies, tactical lights and custom hearing protection. MLEFIAA would like to express its gratitude to the following companies for their on going support:

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Three days of range training were marred only by the rain on Friday. Despite the dampness, we still had shooters on the line and lead going down range. Training programs included 2 Point Shooting classes, Handgun Skill Builder, Realistic Terrorist Threat Mitigation Tactics, Snub Nose Revolver, Fight To Your Firearm, Active

Shooter/First Officer Response, Full Auto (Basic & Advanced), Express Sights, High Intensity Lights as Tools for Law Enforcement, Downed & Disabled Officer, CQB Rifle, Always Cheat-Always Win (Patrol Rifle), Point vs. Precision Shooting, and CQB Refinement Skills.

The conference committee would like to extend their appreciation and thanks to the instructors who gave their time and knowledge. A tip of the hat to Allan Garcia, Joe Maffei, Mike Conti, Matt Temkin, Scott Ferguson, Todd Bailey, Bert DuVernay, Ed O'Leary, Ed Fluery, Paul Cooper, Dave Biggers, Cliff Alves, Mike Boyle, Rance Deware, Bruce Speiwakowski and Bill Leanos. Special thanks to Ulf Petersson and Peter Busing Jorgensen who came from Sweden and Denmark respectively to teach. We would be dead in the water without their dedication. We also would like to thank the Harvard Sportsman's Club and its members for their hospitality.

The MLEFIAA Conference is the premier firearms instructor

training event in the Northeast and continues to grow every year. The conference committee has taken great care to insure the training is the best we can find while keeping costs to a minimum. This has proven to be a challenge with rising costs across the board. We experienced several unforeseen costs this year. HSC implemented a range fee and required outside organizations to provide proof of liability insurance. Both are sound practices from their position but proved to be a \$2350 cost we had not budgeted for when we set the price last year.

The most apparent cost savings measure we made was to change to a new caterer. Pat Natoli did a great job keeping everyone fed. The hot meal on Friday was very much appreciated. This change resulted in a savings of over \$1500. We will discuss the conference in detail at the October meeting (10/21 at Westminster P.D.). Members are invited to attend to provide feedback on this years conference and input for next year.



TRAINING ON SHIFT - Is It Worth The Savings?

Roll call training has always been a great way to pass along training tidbits. You could take 10 to 20 minutes to pass along important information or techniques to keep your officers safe. This on duty training concept has become more popular as the economy has gone into a tail spin and already sparse department budgets are cut even more.

On duty firearms training is becoming more wide spread. Larger agencies with their own range have successfully used this concept for years. Pull a couple of guys off the road for a couple of hours to hit the range and put a few hundred rounds downrange worked fine. It does not work as well with smaller departments. Conducting firearms training with officers on their shift has been a reality with several local departments for several years. Initially it was viewed as a minor inconvenience but as time went on the drawbacks became very apparent.

With only two or three officers on the road, pulling one off reduces the manpower 33 to 50 percent. This generally results the administration putting the "if we need you, respond from the range" caveat on the officer. At the very least, the officers will only be listening partially to you with their ear cocked towards the radio. Your student's head will not be in the game. The petty calls they hate so much will now become their ticket off the range.

Firearms training is serious stuff (or at least it is supposed to be). If the circumstances are such that one of our officers has their weapon out, someone's life is in danger. Is this a situation where we want half assed training? This is the question that you, the instructor, need to be asking the department and



municipal administrators. Marksmanship and tactics are perishable skills. Can you effectively train your officers when their attention lays elsewhere? Any professional educator will tell you that this type of learning environment is counter productive to the student learning the desired skill sets.

Training should be conducted in an atmosphere which is conducive to learning. This does not have to be a classroom. The range can be an effect training ground IF the student's attention is focused on the instructor. It is a well known fact that many police officers do not enjoy training, especially firearms training. This said, once at the training, the student will retain much more of what is taught if there attention is on the subject matter. Realistically, how attention is the officer paying to the instructor if they are listening for a call from dispatch?

Some departments do not have a range and are sending officers out of town to train on duty. This is usually done with parting advice to, "Get back as soon as you can."

This type of training environment could be used by an opposing attorney in the event of an officer involved shooting. If your training program has a history of on duty firearms training where it can be proven the curriculum was regularly cut short when officers

needed answer calls or were otherwise called away, will a jury believe that it was effective training?

The exception to this might be if the on duty firearms training was conducted on a frequent and regular schedule. An hour of firearms training every month which covered all the key skill sets and built on previous classes could stand up to legal scrutiny. This is especially true when many police firearms training programs have been cut back to only annual qualification which amounts to 4 or less hours.

Tight budgets and range closures are going to make our job a lot harder. Sending officers to train while they are on duty is a viable concept if and only if the integrity of the training is maintained. There must be adequate coverage on the shift so that officers complete the training requirements without interruption. The administration must be committed to providing quality training to their troops.

Instructors are accustomed to dealing with less than favorable conditions. Training on duty makes fiscal sense but some guidelines need to be set down in advance. First and foremost there can be no reduction in the quality or quantity of training. With strong backing from the administration, we can make the best of a less than desirable situation.

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Handling Dynamic Encounters: Adaptability and a Flexible Response

By Fred Leland, LESC

Some have described and compared police and security encounters as either static or, dynamic. It's my view that there is no such thing as a static police or security encounter. All encounters whether they progressively evolve over a longer period of time or erupt rapidly in a short period of time, without warning, circumstances surrounding law enforcement and security encounters are all dynamic. Time is moving forward, circumstances changing and the ability of responders to adapt to the ongoing circumstances is always critical.

Speed is the essence of war. Take advantage of the enemy's unpreparedness; travel by unexpected routes and strike him where he has no precautions. ~Sun Tzu the Art of War

In handling dynamic encounters, the phrase "time criticality" is often discussed. In this discussion there is often a miss-conception that to put time on your side, you must force the issue or, force the subject into action and always advance your position by moving forward. Speed is the essence of conflict, but speed does not always mean moving fast physically. It means preparing so you are in a position of advantage, which gives you time, hence speed.

Sun Tzu's definition of speed is often misconstrued and shown through quick responses such as; doors being immediately kicked in upon arrival. You see knee jerk reactions to the report of a single gunshot and immediate entry made without knowing anymore than the fact that a gun went off. You see it in tactical responses and approaches to various calls for service where the possibility of danger exists. You also see it in responders traveling at high rates of

speed across cities and towns or running as fast as they can into an office, in an effort to get to the scene quickly. No thoughts taking place as to how they will approach, "just get there" is the apparent motto. The responders end up in the driveway or in a room without any critical thought of potential violence, being an outcome, of forcing the issue. Individual responders approach rapidly in circumstances where its clearly understood the adversary has the complete advantage and are not actively engaged in deadly actions. Or worst case from my observations, respond in circumstances where not much thought at all has gone into who does or does not have the advantage, they just GO GET HIM!

I understand adrenaline and emotional responses, to high risk encounters. After all, our entire goal is to protect those we serve from harm and in an effort to do so we responders feel an overwhelming urge to rush. I have been there and responded emotionally myself. The problem is rushing in recklessly, when its unnecessary, creates more of a problem instead of, solving the problem. This problem is reinforced because we have succeeded in a lot of these situations and have mistaken "good luck" for "good strategy and tactics."

Rapid response and forcing the fight are viable options in our professions. There is a time and place for the strategy and tactics of dynamic response. They are not the sole options. Sometimes action required is holding a position, or backing off a decision, when circumstances change from active to inactive. The focus on this article is not to solely criticize our responses but instead to shed some

light on the 2,500 year old premise of Knowing when to press the fight and when not too, so we gain the strategic and tactical advantage.

"Victory comes from knowing when to attack and when to avoid battle." ~Sun Tzu, the Art of War

"Go Get him" verses "Set him up, to get him"

The first question that must be asked in deciding what type of response is necessary in the types of situations, law enforcement and security respond to, should be, "is Immediate Dynamic Action Required?" If lives are in "imminent" jeopardy, then the answer is yes... If it is they are in danger but there is no imminent threat to life, then the option may be a non-dynamic scaled response. For a safe resolution, in either scenario the circumstances do demand immediate action. That immediate action does not necessarily mean immediate physical or face to face conflict. If there is no clear imminent threat of loss of life do not force conflict but do not be passive. How do we take action if we are not face to face? John Poole in his book "Phantom Soldier" states; "That action must do two things: (1) further friendly strategy, or (2) attack enemy strategy. By attacking enemy strategy, victory can often be won before the battle starts."

To further friendly strategy in a progressively unfolding set of circumstances where there is no "imminent threat" to life or serious bodily harm, we can prepare for and handle unforeseen circumstances by:

- Establish command and control
 - Gather information
- (Environment and Individual (S)

Handling Dynamic Encounters (continued from Page 7)

- Keep everyone informed
- A clear mission intent
- Position entry/arrest teams (2-man, 4 man, response teams (SWAT)
- Position over watch
- Perimeter containment and security
- Prepare to negotiate
- Prepare to adapt to changing conditions.

To further the friendly strategy it is important to note that the overall commander "TRUST" subordinate team leaders to make decisions. Place individual teams, in positions of advantage of their choosing and allow them to act when, from their position they see opportunities present themselves or, the situation suddenly escalates to that of imminent threat to life or serious bodily harm. Oftentimes there is no time to seek permission to take appropriate action. This is critical to seeking the advantage and why we must have prior training and trust established in an organization. This lack of trust and thus an inability to adapt, is why we see a lot of law enforcement and security responses go bad. Obviously communication and continued updates of changing conditions throughout response teams is paramount.

Putting the friendly strategy in place allows us to "attack the enemy strategy" by containing him. His options are few, and time, in most cases is now on our side. We can now as long as conditions do not change to life threatening status, use non-dynamic tactics such as communication and negotiation in an effort to subdue the adversary. The subject may simply see he has no options and give up, or impatience may put adversary in a disadvantageous position, we can exploit to gain advantage.

If the situation does change rapidly, our preparation and holding back allows adaptation and transition to an appropriate action quickly, to gain advantage and control. Sun Tzu in the Art of War said: "If it is not in the interest of the state, do not act. If you are not sure of success do not use troops. If you are not in danger, do not fight the battle." The employment of strategy in an effort to subdue the enemy without fighting is achieving the best possible results at the least possible cost.

An example of a scaled response to potentially dangerous set of circumstances: I am looking for a distraught young man who threatened suicide. In this process I checked the surrounding neighborhood for signs of the young man to no avail. There is a large park in the neighborhood so I parked my cruiser and got out on foot to take a look around. In the park I was approached by a woman and her young child who pointed to an area of the park about 500 yards away. She said, I just saw a man with a knife throwing it at trees. "its important to note we had just had a murder in the park about a month earlier that shook the small community I work for." She described the man as about 5' 9" 165 pounds, brown hair around 30 years old. She also said he was mumbling incoherent words and appeared "drunk."

I was in full uniform and as I approached. I noted a section of trees and brush, not very thick but did offer some concealment. I approached quietly through this area and put myself in a position to observe this man. I observed the knife in his hand, him throwing the knife at the tree, retrieving it and throwing again. I noticed a bicycle with a six pack of bud

light bungee corded to the bike rack and an open beer on the ground next to the bike, the subject occasionally gulped from. I also noted he was unsteady on his feet and believed him to be somewhat highly intoxicated...I said to myself we have potentially dangerous situation here, man with knife, highly intoxicated, with unusual, not normal behavior of throwing a knife at the tree repetitively, in the park, at the time of a recent unsolved murder.

Because of the clandestine approach I was given time to make decisions, call for back up and set up a tactical clandestine response by two back-up officers and wait till we were positioned advantageously. Myself and back officers had time to confer and decided we would wait till he tossed the knife at the tree and then approach him tactically. We did and initially the subject on seeing us looked at the knife and then slowly processed, it appeared, from his facial gestures and overall body language, that he was out numbered and offered no resistance. We placed the subject into protective custody, he had nothing to do with the murder in the park nor did he have anything to do with the original suicidal youth that put me in the area in the first place.

I often ask myself what would of, could of happened if I decided to just walk up to this guy in full uniform from 500 yards away, in clear view, allowing him the opportunity to observe me and make his own plans. I do not truthfully know for sure what that outcome would have been. I do believe however the fact that we took a clandestine and tactical approach and outnumbered him 3-1 had a great impact even in his state, on

Handling Dynamic Encounters (cont. from previous page)

his deciding to comply.

This scenario and response seems, rather obvious yet look around you at fellow officers or, check the officer down memorial page and you can clearly see that these, most basic strategic and tactical concepts are not being utilized consistently by responders. They put themselves in bad positions because they want the situation resolved and resolved now! The results of such actions are paid at too high a cost, loss of life.

Some other examples where we could use these non-dynamic strategies whether a person is armed or unarmed, and is in some form of conflict that we must bring resolution to, are:

- Mental illness
- Distraught family members
- Physically isolated
- Armed not actively engaged in imminent life threatening actions

Dynamic Responses

"You must use total war, fighting with everything you have. Never stop fighting when at war. You can gain complete advantage. To do this, you must plan your strategy of attack." ~Sun Tzu, the Art of War

A situation turns dynamic when a person puts lives at risk. The protection of life is our priority, always. If the circumstances change or we are suddenly put into a spontaneous set of conditions where life is threatened then, dynamic responses are required. Action is now the critical component to seizing and maintaining the initiative. The tactical decisions you make will determine outcome of the situation. In this case you must react and put a "mental plan" into action to stop the threatening circumstances. The plans you develop and decisions you make will be

based on implicit information and tactical judgment. Your knowledge, training and experience as well as the equipment you have will need to be considered in your decision making options.

An example of a robust (dynamic response) to potentially dangerous set of circumstances: The call came in as a man with a sword trying to get into the house to kill his father. We all responded rapidly to the address in question and the first arriving officer reported the subject had left and was headed towards his own home about 2 miles from the incident location. The officer reported the subject was armed with a Japanese short sword and had tried to stab his father, who was somehow able to keep him out of the house. The screen, to the door was sliced and stab marks were in the door from the sword. Important information relayed from the officer at the scene which told the story of an emotionally/chemically induced violent state.

While in response to the suspects address a detective radioed that he was out with the subject in the driveway of his home. Upon arrival the subject was in the car on the passenger's side with his wife behind the wheel and child, in her arms. The suspect was shouting at the detective who had the subject held at gun point. The detective was positioned on the driver's side in an attempt to get the wife and child out of the car, who were to scared to move. Myself and another officer immediately approached the passenger side. We both tactically kept our guns holstered as we knew the detective, had us both covered. The sword could not initially be seen but both his hands could, and they were clear at the moment.

We opened the door and immediately took the subject, who struggled and fought, off his feet to the muddy ground and controlled him physically and then handcuffed. The Japanese sword was in the car between the seat and the console...

The intuitive decision in the heat of the moment was made to act and control the situation by taking this suspect into custody. We believed that due to his emotionally charged state, he had already attacked a loved one his father, the potential harm to his wife and child outweighed the option of waiting him out. My gut at the time was that he was indecisive yet still emotionally high and unpredictable and the opportunity to take control was presented... This gut feeling was based on the circumstances at the time... We acted upon intuitive judgment based on the current condition taking place at the moment, without harm coming to anyone.

I have often thought this case over and asked would it have been a better option to wait and negotiate? As in most standoffs negotiation is very successful, but this set of circumstances was still unfolding, the subject was emotionally charged and not thinking clearly. He was confused and caught off guard by the detective who initially located him, we arrived seconds after the detective and while positioning ourselves, quickly tactically conferred and then approached, as part of a plan. Allowing the subject time in this scenario, I believe would have given the initiative to him. The Japanese sword was in the car, but not in his hand. It would only take a fraction of a second for him to regain control of the weapon; meaning the wife and baby were in imminent jeopardy of death or

Handling Dynamic Encounters (continued from Page 9)

serious bodily harm. All of us on scene in an after action review felt after critical analysis this particular set of circumstances warranted a robust dynamic response. Some other examples that require dynamic responses are:

- Spontaneous attack
- Suddenly come under attack
- Active shooter in the process of shooting victims
- Violent crimes in progress (life in imminent jeopardy) subject takes tactical advantage
- So called routine, better referred to as unknown risk circumstances turned life threatening
- Car stops
- Alarms
- Arrest and detainments
- Responding to calls for service
- Domestic disturbances
- Field interviews and street encounters

It is my belief that we security and law enforcement professionals all too often needlessly rush, use dynamic responses, in circumstances where a non-dynamic (scaled) response would clearly better our position of advantage.

We have to reconsider the way we do things in an effort to keep ourselves and those we protect, safer when responding to situations. If an individual is no longer in position to harm others then the conditions requiring high risk intervention has changed and a more scaled, cautious solution should be pursued.

We should depend upon our complete knowledge of the circumstances, combined with our knowledge of conflict, strategy and tactics and seek the advantageous position. How we set up and take advantageous positions, our responsiveness and ability to transition to the changing conditions and our ability to attack the adversaries' strategy and maneuver him to an advantageous position for us are keys to success. A thorough understanding of all this will enable us to gain the advantage and if at all possible win without fighting.

It is important to understand we are making decisions based on the ongoing circumstance and not

on yesterdays approach, an all too often route we in the protection professions take. Utilize your experiences from the past to help you read via the Boyd Cycle and adjust to the present moment and conditions. The circumstance we respond too are dangerous and in the heat of battle, it is difficult to curtail emotions and slow the process down, yet in my opinion the vast majority of circumstances require just that, slowing down.

We must have presence of mind and develop individually, the ability to read the situation. Some circumstances the response is obvious, others not so. For certain, all conflict is ridden with uncertainty, chaos, disorder, confusion and is unpredictable. To know when to use non-dynamic verses dynamic tactics is a skill that takes practice and time to develop. Your intuitive sense as to what's happening can be enhanced through available time, to gain deeper knowledge of the situation. Even a few seconds, a fraction of a second, can make the difference between a good or bad



Handling Dynamic Encounters (continued from previous page)

tactical decision. So whatever time you have available take it. While responding gather as much information as you can, think about the possible problems and quickly run them through your mind with plans to handle them. Think about proper approach and basic tactical concepts such as cover, concealment that can give you the advantage of time through a clandestine approach... Time critical, speed, does not mean rush a reckless response; it means get the time advantage through information gathering and preparation and positioning.

Next time you hear the term "time is of the essence, we have to do something!" Just what is that "something" we should be doing? is it "GET HIM" a blind emotional rush into circumstances forcing an issue, or should it be "SET HIM

UP TO GET HIM" a strategic and tactical response that puts us in a position to win. There is a time for each type of response. Knowing the difference, controlling emotions (mental calmness) being flexible and able to adapt to changing circumstances and make good decisions, in dynamic encounters is the key to successful and safe resolutions.

Fred Leland is an active Lieutenant with the Walpole PD and a former United States Marine. He is an accomplished and accredited trainer with more than 28 years experience teaching Law Enforcement, Military and Security professionals. He is a graduate of the FBI National Academy Class 216, where he specialized in terrorism related topics, leadership and management. He is currently an instructor for the Massachusetts Municipal Police Training Committee where he teaches decision making, use of force, firearms, terrorism, leadership and incident command to veteran law enforcement

officers. His specialties are handling dynamic encounters, threat assessment, use of force, and decision making under pressure and one and two man tactical response. Fred is a student of the late modern day Strategist COL John Boyd and the Ancient Strategist Sun Tzu. He founded Law Enforcement and Security Consulting, Inc (LESC) in 2006 with the focus of bringing these principles to law enforcement, military and security personnel. A key component in much of Fred's Training is the Boyd Cycle, also known as the OODA Loop. The cycle consist of a tactical decision making process which, when understood and utilized properly, improves response times, confidence and resolve. Through development of powers of observation, orientation, decision and action (OODA) and the implementation of these individual processes in a repetitive cycle, officers improve both their ability to correctly assess threats and the reaction time needed to deal with them. Fred is a licensed trainer through the Science of Strategy Institute which focuses on bringing the time tested and proven methods of Sun Tzu to, organizations looking to improve their overall organizational performance.

12 CRITICAL ELEMENTS OF A MODERN FIREARMS TRAINING PROGRAM by Bank Miller & Ben Kurata (reprinted from PoliceOne.com)

Considering the myriad current requirements and budget constraints, law enforcement firearms trainers may find their jobs increasingly challenging. To help build a solid foundation and establish some basic criteria for what a law enforcement training program should include, Action Target Academy has adopted the 12 critical elements outlined below.

The information gathered for this analysis was obtained from several surveys conducted by the California Commission on Peace Officers Standards and Training (POST) and the Federal Bureau of Investigation. The FBI has collected data on officers killed and assaulted since 1945, and California POST started collecting such data in 1980. The surveys cited in this study encompass those conducted by the FBI from 1995

through 2004. After summarizing these studies, the following guidelines were drawn for police firearms training.

1. Prepare officers for immediate, spontaneous, lethal attacks. Based on the above statistics, it becomes obvious that close quarter tactics and techniques are a must for officer survival. Personal communication with unknown individuals is a large part of law enforcement officers' daily routine. In order to communicate effectively, officers must be close enough to the person to communicate. The difficulty arises when some of these people turn out to be bad guys. When this happens, a mastery of drawing and firing from various close quarter positions, weapon retention, physical strikes and other close-quarter combat skills are critical.

To satisfy the close distance issue, a basic cardboard target holder that is sturdy enough to withstand muzzle blast, palm strikes and an occasional flying ticket book should serve you well. As far as sudden and spontaneous goes, a high-speed turning target system that suddenly presents a bad guy just as the officers glances away can add a tremendous amount of stress to the situation

2. Prepare officers for assaults by multiple threats and uninvolved subjects. Statistics tell us that there is about a 60% chance that an assault will involve more than one attacker. At the same time, we need to be aware of uninvolved, innocent bystanders as well. In many domestic abuse calls, the spouse or other family members can start out as uninvolved and quickly join sides

against the officer, if a conflict ensues. Learning to break the tunnel vision phenomenon and engage multiple threats with total awareness of uninvolved subjects justifies shoot/no-shoot training, increases survivability and decreases liability issues.

The most obvious approach here is lots of targets. Tall ones, short ones, some closer, some farther away, some clustered in a group and some off by themselves. Another particularly effective technique employs turning targets, although they have to be individually controlled. As your officer is engaging targets 1 and 2 as they edge and face right in front of him, try facing target 6 and see if he notices. Better yet, use a 180 degree turning target that can show you a bad guy or a good guy in the same place at any given time.

3. Integrate the sudden transition to firearms from arrest and control techniques, including searching and handcuffing. Many potentially lethal assaults occur as the officer is searching and/or attempting to handcuff the subject. This sudden shift to a deadly force situation can be exceptionally dangerous if the officer has not been conditioned with the proper response techniques. Glaring examples of insufficient training and conditioning include: a failure of the officer to create distance if the chance arises, or an attempt by the officer to draw his firearm while his handcuffs are still in his hand. The use of drag dummies, CPR dummies and turning targets are all effective here. The dummies provide realism and a platform for practicing control techniques, while the turning targets provide the sudden visual indicator that the situation has escalated.

4. Base training on the fact that most officers are killed at short

distances. The statistical table presented earlier clearly establishes where most officer fatalities occur. However, it is important to note that this element does not say “Teach your officers how to shoot at close distances.” It says to base your training on the fact that most fatalities occur up close. It’s like the guy who tells his doctor that he broke his leg in two places and the doctor says “So, don’t go to those places!” If most fatalities occur at close distances, we should all be aware of when it is appropriate to be farther away. In addition to the close-quarter combat techniques discussed earlier, a moving target that charges straight at the officer can be extremely effective at illustrating the importance of creating distance, and demonstrating the best ways to move quickly and effectively in various situations.

5. Base training on the fact that officers will have limited fine and complex motor control. We should all be aware of the various physiological responses our bodies undergo during a combat situation. Manual dexterity is the one we are focusing on here. As blood flows away from our extremities and toward our core, we lose a degree of fine and complex motor control in our fingers and hands. Unfortunately, elements of good marksmanship like trigger control can be the first to go. Now before a panic ensues, we believe that teaching basic marksmanship skills (like proper trigger manipulation) is absolutely vital and should not be abandoned! However, make room in your training for the fact that fine and complex motor control will be decreased.

The best way to demonstrate the effects of stress to your officers is to immerse them in it. Make them run, get their heart pumping and their adrenaline flowing, then send them into an interactive scenario

with dye marking rounds and role-playing bad guys shooting back at them. The breakdowns in technique will be startling.

6. Integrate two-person contact and cover teams involved in realistic scenarios. Just because one of your officers knows how to safely and effectively engage multiple threats, reload efficiently and move from one piece of cover to another doesn’t mean he knows how to do those things with two or three other officers running around him, trying to do the same thing at the same time. Where is my muzzle? Where is my partner? Where is my partner’s muzzle? Proper tactical communication is absolutely critical!

Have two- and three-man teams go through tactical scenarios together. Use portable cardboard and steel targets in a variety of locations and configurations. Have the teams shoot side by side so their partner’s brass is bouncing off the bill of their cap. Condition them to be profoundly muzzle conscious, and make them realize the importance of communication when it comes to moving, reloading and staying in the fight.

7. Emphasize the survival mindset and the will to win in all skills training. Quite often, what you bring to the fight will dictate the outcome of the fight. Having a winning mindset and a positive attitude will only enhance the officer’s odds of survival. While our work is dangerous, we have a high risk of being a victim off the street rather than on the street, and at times the biggest threat we face is the one in the mirror. Particularly with younger officers, movies and television have shaped much of what they perceive as the realities of a gunfight. For example, the guy that flies back 15 feet and crashes into a pile of trash cans after being

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hit with a single handgun round. Clint Smith said if you get into a fist fight you might get punched, if you get into a knife fight you might get cut, and if you get into a gunfight you might get shot. It doesn't mean the fight is over, it just means you may have to finish the fight a little differently than you had originally planned. |

Knowing how to shoot, reload, and clear malfunctions with only one hand (both left and right) is imperative. Our officers must be confident in their ability to win the fight, even if they are injured. They must also be comfortable with these techniques in order to gain that confidence.

8. Integrate one-handed firing of a handgun. Include dominant and support hand, plus drawing, reloading and stoppage clearing. Many law enforcement shootings occur with one hand, and using a single hand is often to your tactical benefit (based on the situation.) Even if you are not injured, a traditional two-handed grip may be impractical or even dangerous if it means giving up too much cover or concealment.

Primarily for safety reasons, one-handed skill training is best executed in small groups. Because officers will be presenting and handling their weapons in untraditional and perhaps unfamiliar ways, muzzle awareness is critically important.

9. Integrate close-quarter structure searching and clearing, plus indoor combat tactics. When a family comes home to find their back door kicked in, they call the police. Does the call go to the SWAT team? Of course not—it goes to the nearest officers on patrol. Either alone or with a partner, every single officer needs to know how to perform basic close-quarter techniques like tactical entry, hallway navigation and room clearing. They need to know things like which way a door swings if you can see the hinges (toward you), and they need to know things like: don't expose body parts around corners, don't rub you back along the wall as you move and don't hang out in doorways. |

A live-fire ballistic shoot house is the ultimate training tool for these

situations. It provides a structure for all the tactical movement and navigation training, plus it escalates the stress and realism of the training by incorporating threat engagement with actual duty weapons. It's one thing to fire a gun in a nice straight line out on the qualification range. It is another thing entirely when you are inside a building trying to be aware of 360 degree environment.

10. Emphasize dim- or no light situations as much as daylight training. Because 70% or more of law enforcement shootings occur under reduced or diminishing light conditions, significant training with your duty illumination tools is a must. Target identification and threat recognition are critical parts of this training as well. Keep in mind that flashlights are needed in the daytime just as much as at night, because you never know where you may end up. The illumination tools you carry will have a significant impact on how you handle your weapon, and ultimately on how you fight, so you must be extremely comfortable using them under a wide variety of tactical situations. Many departments have adopted the use of lasers, so your training must include the proper use of these tools as well.

If you already have a shoot house that can be darkened, you have an ideal venue for all kinds of low-light training. An indoor range also serves this purpose well. If you don't have access to either of these facilities, use your outdoor range.

11. Integrate "moving then shooting" and "moving while shooting" techniques. If you maintain a picture-perfect stance during a gunfight, you are not doing it correctly. If you are not moving to create distance, you should be moving to cover. The ability to shoot effectively while incorporating lots of movement gives you a dramatic tactical advantage. It also increases your chances of survival and decreases the chance of hitting something you don't want to hit. Remember, when shooting while moving you should move no faster than you can hit, see and in some cases, hear.

Effective movement techniques can be taught with just about any target equipment. Running man targets and automated turning targets can make the experience more realistic and intense by allowing the trainer to control the scenario and respond to the trainee's actions.

12. Integrate engagement techniques

for moving targets, both laterally and charging. Training on moving targets has become mandatory for law enforcement agencies across the country, and rightfully so. When was the last time you were in a violent confrontation with someone who just stood still? Because running seems to be a part of most gunfights, the ability to fire safely and accurately at moving threats can be one of an officer's greatest assets. It is important to train for both lateral threat movement and charging movement because each requires a specific skill set and response from the trainee. |

Some portable moving target systems are very effective and flexible because they can be configured for both types of threat movement (lateral and charging). A heavier-duty track-mounted system can be equipped with a steel target plate to enhance muscle memory through the immediate positive feedback of clanging steel. |

Again, being a law enforcement firearms trainer today is an extremely difficult job. You have to be part teacher, part motivator, part mechanical engineer, part lawyer, part drill sergeant, part counselor, part maintenance staff, part etc. etc. We pay tribute to you trainers who dedicate your efforts to developing the next generation of warriors, and we hope the information presented here serves to focus and clarify the process.

For more information, contact Bank Miller and Ben Kurata at Action Target Academy, P O Box 636, Provo, UT 84603; 603-772-9627 or www.actiontargetacademy.com.

Editors note: This article was originally published on the PoliceOne.com website. Bank Miller & Ben Kurata have been frequent contributors to the Association for many years as well as presenting at the annual training conference.

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